(e) if so, the details of each separate plan, alongwith the expenditure to be incurred on each of them; and

(f) by when each plan would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (f) On the basis of a unit-wise viablity study made by NTC, Government is considering a revised turn around plan for the viable subsidiaries of NTC alongwith the viable mills under them keeping in view the BIFR norms of net worth of these mills turning positive within the period prescribed by BIFR. The interest of the workers will be kept in view in the Revival Plan.

**Import of Jute and Cotton**

887. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to stop the import of jute, cotton etc in the interest of the farmers;

(b) if not the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to help the farmers to increase the per hectare yield of such commodities and also to improve their quality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) At present there are no quantitative restrictions on import of raw jute or Cotton. However import duty @5% on import of raw jute and @5% on import of Cotton has been introduced in the budget of 1999-2000. The import of jute accounts for less than 6% of the total domestic production of raw jute and mainly consists of such grades and varieties of fine and high grade fibre, not produced in India which is used to manufacture value added diversified jute products meant for exports. Raw cotton imports are allowed mainly for the purposes of maintaining export competitiveness and on considerations of importing cotton of higher grade quality.

(c) The Government has taken the following steps to help the farmers increase the production and yield of jute and cotton:

(i) For raw jute, various research institutions like CRIJAF, NIRJAFT have given thrust on high yielding selections and multiplication of seeds to improve the yield of the fibre.

(ii) For improving the quality of raw jute, better retting tank facilities are being provided in various jute growing states, to the farmers.

(iii) For improving the yield and quality of cotton, a Cotton Technology Mission is being formulated. The mission will concentrate on cotton research for improvement of varietal profile and development of production technology towards improvement of production and quality of cotton.

**Voluntary Retirement/Terminal Benefits of Employees of N.T.C.**

888. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that majority of the NTC units have been closed and others are in a badshape due to out-dated technology and its employees are not paid salary; if so, where these mills are located;

(b) whether NTC owns lands in metropolitan cities where these mills are located; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any plan of offer voluntary retirement to employees of NTC or other terminal benefits, and permit NTC to use land for commercial purposes and redeem its loss; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Out of 119 mills of NTC, 80 mills are working either fully or partially. There is no production activity in 39 mills whose name with locations are given in the enclosed statement-I (*see* below) Shortfall in wages/salaries is being met by the Government. All permanent NTC employees are being paid their wages and salaries although some time there may be delay in making payments.